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ABSTRACT

In order to identify and analyze conditions and factors that may affect the success of two-year colleges in securing federal categorical aid funds, 28 public community colleges in Florida were studied. In fiscal year 1975, four had received more than $1,000,000 in federal categorical aid funds, three over $500,000, eleven between $125,000 and $500,000, and ten had received less than $125,000. After a preliminary survey, nine institutions were selected for site visitations. High-funded institutions had a well-planned federal relations/resource development program that was given top priority by the chief executive officer. Other factors influencing success in obtaining funds were clearly defined and obtainable institutional objectives, institutional credibility, a well-prepared project proposal, a full-time federal relations officer, careful targeting of proposals, close contact with federal agencies, and a high level of agreement between the chief executive officer and resource development personnel. Conditions characteristic of low-funded institutions included an administrative philosophy not conducive to actively seeking federal assistance, and lack of knowledge about the availability of funds and about how to start, support, and operate a resource development program. Personnel in low-funded institutions stressed a need for adequate time, staff, and financial support, and for assistance and opportunity to develop the sophistication and knowledge necessary for planning and initiating a resource development program. (AYC)

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RESOURCE PAPER NO. 15

CONDITIONS AND FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SUCCESSFUL FEDERAL FUNDING

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Conditions and Factors Associated with Successful Federal Funding

During 1976-77 a study was conducted of selected public Florida Community Junior Colleges to identify and analyze conditions and factors (variables) that may affect the success of some public two-year community junior colleges in identifying and successfully securing categorical aid funds from the federal government.

Of the twenty-eight public community junior colleges in Florida during Fiscal Year 1975 four institutions received more than $1,000,000 through federal categorical aid programs; three received over $500,000; eleven received between $125,000 and $500,000; and ten received less than $125,000. (From the Florida Community Colleges Statement of Revenues and Other Receipts for Education and General Objectives.)

All twenty-eight community junior colleges were sent a preliminary questionnaire consisting of forty-two variables associated with funding success. Examination of the responses provided for the selection of nine institutions representative of "high", "middle" and "low" funded institutions for site visitations and a more detailed analysis of their funding posture. This article represents a selected summary of the findings of that study.

The data gathered affirm that there are numerous conditions and/or factors that are associated with successfully identifying and securing federal categorical aid dollars. Selected conditions and factors were identified as having an impact on the amount or diversity of federal categorical aid dollars received by selected institutions. High funded institutions were those with a planned federal relations/resource development program consisting of administrative activities involving the following:

1. institutional planning of educational objectives;
2. institutional decision making regarding funding priorities;
3. securing the necessary knowledge and information for identifying and competing for federal funds;
4. agency and external relations necessary to develop and promote project proposals and establish institutional credibility with funding agencies;
5. proposal development and preparation process.

Essential to the success of a new or continuing federal relations program is the administrative decision that resource development activities will be a positive asset and a direction that the college should pursue to effectively deliver educational programs and services. Imperative is the affirmative decision that the federal relations effort will be given top priority by the chief executive officer, support by other top administrative staff, and promotion within the professional faculty and staff. This initial commitment appears to be necessary in order to:

1. develop positive attitudes of other top and middle management administrators regarding the potentials of federal categorical assistance programs;

2. develop an understanding of the institution's philosophy, goals and priorities and their relationships to the variety, intent, priorities and guidelines of federal programs;

3. coordinate institutional planning and decision-making pertaining to funding sources prior to formal proposal development and submission.

In order to implement and conduct these basic activities, federal relations/resource development personnel viewed the support of the chief executive officer as being the single most important variable, while chief executive officers perceived that a full-time federal relations/resource development officer was the most important variable in conducting an ongoing resource development program.

Analysis of conditions and factors associated with securing federal categorical aid funds affirms the assumption that variables exist that tend to be significantly responsible for some community/junior colleges securing an appreciable amount of federal categorical aid dollars. Responses also indicate that some variables or factors are perceived as being more influential than others. Of the forty-two conditions, the following twelve were ranked highest in terms of their perceived importance and based on a combined average of the perceptions of all respondents:

1. a positive attitude of top administrators regarding federal categorical aid programs;
2. institutional credibility with funding agencies and personnel;
3. support of the chief executive officer;
4. a well-prepared project proposal (grant);
5. a full-time federal relations or development officer;
6. a well-planned and coordinated institutional development program;
7. "targeting" or careful submission of selected grant proposals;
8. college personnel involved in federal relations who understand the institution's philosophy, goals and priorities;
9. contact with and visitation to Washington, D.C. funding agencies, regional offices, state agencies, etc.;
10. placement of the federal relations or development officer in the formal organizational structure;
11. an understanding at the college of the intent and priorities of federal legislation;
12. institutional planning involving goals and objectives.

Though low funded institutions had the same funding alternatives available to them, the chief executive officers and federal relations/resource development personnel had wide variances in personal values and/or degrees of knowledge with reference to sources of federal categorical aid funds, target setting and the importance of supportive activities. Strategies to be utilized in securing funding and organizational experimentation or risk-taking were rather subdued when compared to higher funded institutions. High funded institutions, through the application of aspects of the decision-making process presented by Griffiths and Miles, were able to effectively identify and secure financial assistance through federal categorical aid programs. Furthermore, the five administrative activity categories identified and previously referred to were effectively and timely pursued by the high funded institutions. High funded institutions evidenced a functional institutionalized process effective in identifying problems, analyzing possible solutions, collecting data, selecting alternate courses of action and organizing to implement the proper solution. Low funded institutions evidenced a general inability or unwillingness, due to variances of values and knowledge of federal relations, to make those decisions and implement those actions necessary to make the existing system effective in securing federal categorical aid.

The closer the chief executive officer and the federal relations/resource development officer are in their perceptions and understanding of the variables

associated with securing federal funds, the higher is the funding or the more effective is the federal relations/resource development effort; the greater the differences, the less effective. High funded institutions indicated a higher level of agreement between the chief executive officer and resource development personnel, and were likewise characterized by a higher level of funding.

High funded institutions posess an administrative construct or process capable of posing needed questions, identifving solutions and designing blueprints for further investigations. Low funded institutions indicated an inability to accurately identify and effectively determine choices that must be made through systematic analysis. Low funded institutions evidence the lack of necessary information, professional capabilities and/or value base which combine to retard the functional decision-making or administrative process necessary to plan, implement and conduct an effective federal relations/resource development program.

High funded institutions demonstrate the ability and willingness to make the necessary decisions, take the necessary risks and commit the necessary resources to plan, prepare and submit grant/contract proposals to the federal government, whereas low funded institutions were less able or unwilling to translate intent or perceptions into concrete and effective action or educational products. Those institutions that identified the need or potential need for additional funds and examined the variety of ways to profit from available funds were ultimately more successful in securing funds than those institutions failing to identify and evaluate sources of financial assistance.

The general observation is that those institutions that evidenced planning involving target setting, problem solving and organizational experimentation (risk-taking activities) received more federal funding across a wider or more diverse range of programs than did the low funded institutions.

Observations of high funded institutions reveal that:

1. The high funded institutions invest more dollars in supporting the federal relations/resource development function than do low funded institutions. (See Table I.)

2. Personnel of the high funded institutions are more sophisticated through travel, exposure, access to information and agency contacts than are personnel of the low funded institutions.

3. High funded institutions have full-time resource development officers with adequate supportive staff, which other institutions have individuals assigned part-time responsibilities for federal relations/resource development activities.

4. Travel budgets and agency contacts are related to total dollars received; the more contacts and work-related travel, the greater the total dollars received.

5. High funded institutions maintain a higher and more consistent level of funding than do low funded institutions.

6. Institutions committed to adequate staffing, maintaining the greatest access to information and agency contacts, and having flexible budgets for development activities receive more dollars from federal sources.

Comparatively, low funded institutions do not have a coordinated resource development/federal relations program due in part to the following conditions:

1. ill-informed personnel, including the president, of the availability, opportunities and sources of federal funds;

2. an institutional or administrative philosophy not conducive to actively seeking or accepting federal categorical assistance through available programs;

3. lack of current knowledge and unfamiliarity with the financial and educational successes of other institutions receiving federal categorical aid funds;

4. uncertainty of the institution's capabilities to compete with the more successful colleges;

5. lack of knowledge of how to start, support and operate a resource development federal relations program;

6. insecurities pertaining to possible "negative" conditions sometimes associated with federal aid programs such as "audits", contractual obligations, financial dependence, government controls and restrictions and other "myths" associated with federal funding.

Those personnel assigned the resource development function in institutions of the low funded group stressed a special need for:

1. adequate time to do the job;
2. adequate staff;
3. adequate financial support;
4. assistance and opportunity to develop the sophistication and knowledge necessary for planning and initiating a comprehensive resource development program;
5. improving existing capabilities to conduct a federal relations program;
6. active support of the chief executive officer and institutional commitment to activities necessary for an effective federal relations/resource development program.

An important index of administrative support is the adequacy of financial resources assigned to the federal relations function.

The following selected conclusions are presented after analysis of the data:

1. Specific conditions, factors or variables do exist that are associated with success in securing federal categorical aid funds.

2. High funded institutions are significantly more dynamic in their interaction with the external environment (federal, state, local) and thus are more aware of, and responsive to, feedback or input than are low funded institutions.

3. Those community junior colleges that have a full-time federal relations/resource development officer with an adequate budget for staff, travel, communications, publications and staff development receive the greatest number of federal dollars and have a consistently higher funding level

than do institutions with less than a full-time development officer or an inadequately financed federal relations/resource development program.

4. Many college presidents, top administrative personnel and federal relations/resource development personnel need up-to-date information and sophistication pertaining to the educational opportunities and funding possibilities of federal programs as well as assistance in initiating and/or strengthening existing federal relations/resource development programs;

5. Chief executive officers and federal relations/resource development personnel tend to agree in their perceptions involving concepts and theory, though chief executive officers tend to vary in degree of commitment and administrative support to their federal relations/resource development programs. The data also suggest that they differ in their perceptions of the priority and/or importance of specific variables in conducting a federal relations/resource development program.

6. The success of an institution in securing external or federal assistance is significantly related to the philosophical and administrative commitment of the chief executive officer as well as the degree of administrative and financial support necessary to implement activities or factors associated with a federal relations/resource development program (office).

7. Institutions securing the higher levels of federal funding demonstrated more congruent administrative and perceptual relationships between chief executive officers and federal relations/resource development officers than did low funded institutions.

8. Those institutions that define clear and attainable objectives and establish priorities and guidelines for performance are more effective in guiding institutional resource development than those institutions with ill-defined performance objectives.

It is essential that the "perceptions" and importance of factors and conditions associated with successful funding be understood by both the chief executive officer and those assigned the federal relations/resource development function. Hopefully, the instruments of analysis developed in this study will assist other colleges to analyze their administrative and/or funding posture and improve their capabilities to expand the financial base of their institutions.[1]

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[1] Young, John E. A Study to Determine Variables Associated with Success of Selected Florida Public Two-Year Community Junior Colleges in Obtaining Categorical Aid Funds from the Federal Government. University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, June, 1977.

Additional information concerning this study, including the variables examined and instruments used, can be obtained from John E. Young, Santa Fe Community College, Gainesville, Florida 32601.

TABLE I

COMPILATION OF SELECTED WRITTEN INTERVIEW RESPONSES OF RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

	High Funded Group Institution			Middle Funded Group Institution			Low Funded Group Institution		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
1. Conferences, Professional meetings, Workshops, Seminars attended during 1975-76	2	4	14	5	6	4	3	2	0
2. Attended AACJC Federal Relations Internship Program	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
3. Approximate number of annual visitations to:									
Washington, D.C.	20	4	5	6	3	2	3	0	0
Agencies	20	4	12-15	20	3	1	10	0	0
Congressional	0	4	2	10	3	0	5	0	0
Other Colleges	12	10	18	10	10	1	10	1	0
Professional Consultants	6	4	3	0	3	0	5	0	0
State Offices	3	1	5	30	10	0	10	0	0
4. Full-time (FT) or Part-time (PT) Development Officer	FT	FT	FT	FT	PT	PT	FT	PT	PT
5. Staff Assistant (SA) or Secretarial (SEC) Assistance	SA SEC	SA SEC	SA SEC	SA SEC	SEC	PT SEC	PT SEC	PT SEC	PT SEC
6. Estimated Dollars Budgeted to the Federal Relations/ Resource Development Office for 1975-76:									
Total	95,048	128,700	81,000	28,000	11,075	N/A	59,750	0	0
Travel	7,990	6,800	5,800	4,500	3,200	1,500	3,500	0	0
Consultant	2,000	5,000	1,200	0	500	N/A	3,700	0	0
Publications	6,000	4,000	2,000	1,000	500	N/A	3,500	0	0
7. Number of Publications Subscribed to	17	16	45	28	15	5	19	0	9
8. Number of Dollars from Federal Government (Florida Community College Statement of Revenues)									
1974-75	2,291,214	1,608,230	1,540,741	1,265,366	239,477	926,408	116,129	99,539	49,940
1975-76	3,691,197	1,305,331	1,153,226	1,414,800	772,714	1,466,132	71,374	148,528	100,000

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